

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"The solid foundation" [mentioned by Sir F. M. Eden], "on which our commercial connexions with America are fixed, is a treaty, all the commercial and maritime regulations of which, are of themselves to cease in two years from the end of the late war with France. Then, Sir, it is to be determined, in the negotiations of a new treaty, what further regulations shall be adopted, with respect to the American commerce with the West-Indies; and also it is to be determined, whether in any, and in what cases, neutral vessels shall protect enemy's property. These are points, Sir, on which America will be much more obstinate than you imagine. They have ever been the objects nearest her heart; and, she will ere long obtain them, or she will effect the ruin of our colonies. Your peace has at once humbled us, and exalted every other nation, whose interests, or views, are, or may be, opposed to our own."—MR. COBBETT'S LETTERS TO Mr. Addington on the Preliminaries of Peace. New Edition, p. 248. Published in January, 1802.

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LETTER VIII.

TO R. B. SHERIDAN, ESQ. M. P.

SIR,—How far the London news-printers have profited from the advantages, offered them by the singular circumstances of the times; what have been the nature and tendency of their publications; how those publications will bear a comparison with former publications from the same pens, and respecting the same principles, and the same person or persons; what degree of credit, for fair and honourable conduct, the nation is likely to derive from their labours, on which you have bestowed such unbounded applause; these, Sir, are amongst the objects of the examination, which will form the subject of the present letter.—The circumstances of the times offered most striking advantages for making of the press such an use as would have not only excited a spirit calculated to resist the efforts, which the French may make against this country, but as would also have completely revived the ancient salutary prejudice against France, generally speaking, at the same time that it eradicated every fibre of those poisonous principles of republicanism, which the modern French have scattered all over the world, and which the London news-printers and yourself have heretofore used no common exertions to propagate in this kingdom. But, so far were the conductors of the press from giving this direction to its powers, that, with the exception of Buonaparté, the persons, whom they thought most worthy of their hatred, were precisely those, of whom no harm could be said, without implicating, in some sort, the cause of royalty; and, of course, without injuring that in which we were engaged, it being very evident, that the ultimate object of the present war is, on the part of France, to destroy the British government; and that, therefore, the question with us is, "*monarchy or no monarchy?*" Instead of endeavouring to convince the people, that the tyranny,

in France, had arisen out of the levelling principle, the London news-writers were, and yet are, continually, crying out against Buonaparté for having destroyed that principle. It is as a despot, not as a demagogue, that they rail against him; as a tyrant, not as an usurper; as a traitor to the people, not to his Sovereign; as the apparent friend, not as the real enemy of the Gallican church. The grounds of hatred to Buonaparté became more and more evident from the description and character of the persons, who were associated with him as objects of attack, and amongst whom the French Bishops occupied a prominent place. Mandates were, upon the breaking out of the war, sent by the several bishops to their clergy, the greater part of which mandates contained sentiments disadvantageous to the government and the people of England. This circumstance, which was by no means extraordinary, which was nothing to be wondered at, and, indeed, nothing that could justify rancorous expressions, even in an enemy, was laid hold of, with an eagerness that surprised every one, who had not been an observer of the persecuting spirit, which these writers had ever manifested towards the royalists of France, and particularly towards those of them, who had given the strongest proofs of their attachment to the Catholic church. The moment the mandates appeared in the *Moniteur*, all the French Bishops were immediately accused, by the London news-writers, of perjury, of blasphemy, and of the basest of treason to their Sovereign. If these charges had been well-founded, they would have had an odd appearance in the very same papers, and other periodical works, wherein the French had been openly applauded for their rebellion against their king; in many of which Robespierre had met with most strenuous advocates; and all of which had approved of a peace with Buonaparté. But, the charges were unfounded. Out of

131 French Bishops, who were in existence in 1790, 47 died before the Pope's brief, for resigning their sees, was issued; 37 refused to resign; five never were consulted; so that, there remained but 42, who had resigned, and who alone could, of course, belong to the new Gallican church. To impute perjury, blasphemy, and treason, therefore, to *all* the French Bishops, was a false and malignant libel, and a most cruel and cowardly attempt to add to the pain already endured by a number of aged and most respectable, though unfortunate, gentlemen; who, besides the offences against their Sovereign and their God, were charged with *ingratitude* towards this country, "where they had been fed and protected." But, as to this latter point, it appeared, upon inquiry, that of all the French Bishops, who had resided in England, only *five* resigned their sees; these five of them, and these five only, returned to France; one of them died before the present war broke out; so that, there were only *four*, who could, in their mandates, possibly have shown any *ingratitude* of the sort alluded to; and, it so happened, that, in the mandates of these four, not one word was to be found injurious to this country or its people! — From the same motive that the Bishops were chosen as objects of abuse, the other French emigrants were selected. It was industriously reported, that the plans for the invasion were all furnished by them; and that they collected the materials for these plans, "while they were eating the bread of this country." Upon this assertion the news-writers founded a proposition for hanging in chains every man, belonging to an invading French army, who, upon being made prisoner, should be found to have been in this kingdom, in the character of an emigrant during the last war! So base a thought as this never before entered the mind of man; and never could have found its way into any mind, except one of those, which are continually on the rack to discover new means of humouring the worst of the rabble. The monstrous injustice of this proposition shocked every man of sentiment, and was reprobated, more particularly, by all the foreigners whose ears it reached. Amongst the persons, coming under the character of emigrants, were many of the officers and soldiers of those *foreign corps*; nine thousand persons belonging to which were, by our wise ministers, disbanded at the close of the last war. There was, indeed, in the amnesty of the Consul, an exception against persons, who had borne arms against France during the war; but, this exception was suffered to lie a dead letter, and the

men, who had so gallantly served under our colours during the war, and whom Mr. Yorke and his colleagues were "glad to spare" the moment peace was made, Buonaparté was equally glad to receive into his service. Against these persons the cry of *ingratitude* was doubly strong. What! to refuse to remain to be kicked and cuffed, like dogs, by the door-keepers at the Horse-Guards and in Downing Street; to refuse to stay here and starve to death, or to beg their bread in the street, after having ventured their lives a thousand times in his Majesty's service; to prefer the service of Buonaparté to such an existence, or such an end; was this a proof of ingratitude! Was this something which it became the British nation to regard as an offence? Which it became the British nation to complain of and to threaten to punish by an ignominious death? What were these men to do? Arms was their profession; they could not turn shop-keepers; if they had been willing to debase themselves by taking up a mechanical or dealing occupation, they would have found neither work nor customers; and, therefore, they were compelled to leave the country and to become soldiers again in France, or to remain here and beg or starve; and, because they were not disposed to end their days as paupers, to lick up the crumbs that fell from the tables of the generous shop-keepers of London, they ought, according to the notion of the news-writers, if taken in the service of their new master, to be put to death, in defiance of the laws of war, and to "grace" "the loftiest gibbets" that could possibly be erected! Your friends, Sir, were very particular as to the gibbeting part: the gibbets were to be *very lofty*, and the ceremony was to take place *instantly* after the unfortunate victims should fall into our hands! — In both the instances, the hatred to royalty really appears to me to have been much greater than the hatred towards the enemy, whose threat seems, up to the time of which I am now speaking, only to have furnished the news-writers with a pretext for exciting in the minds of the rabble a desire to abuse, or to commit violence on, the French royalists, to whom there was, as yet, a strong disposition to attribute the "*unfortunate*" recommencement of hostilities." But, when it was stated, and believed, that Buonaparté had made a solemn declaration, that, the moment he took possession of London, he would *ship all the news-writers and printers off to Cayenne*, these gentlemen entered, in good earnest, into a mortal league against him and against all his subjects, his army in particular. Not, therefore, for the sake of their country

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or their Sovereign; not from any consideration but their own personal safety was it, that they publicly proposed to the government and the nation to *murder the prisoners of war*, who, in case of invasion, might fall into our hands. This was the most scandalous, the most base and infamous scheme or intention that ever was entertained by any human being; and, it discovered, at the same time, insolence, which would not have been endured by any other public in the world. The army, nay, the nation, the whole of the people of this kingdom, were to render themselves the scorn and detestation of all mankind; were to become assassins, murderers in cold blood, merely to prevent the possibility of the news-mongers of London, the dealers in advertisements and paragraphs, the venders of flattery and of scandal, being disturbed in the pursuit of their pestiferous trade! It is, however, but justice to observe, that, as to this point, there was one honourable exception; * and, as far as my observation went, but one; one only amongst about thirty newspapers, which did not cordially, and without hesitation, adopt the cut-throat principles broached by a paper † notoriously under the immediate control of the ministers, of one of whom, indeed, it is well known to be, in part at least, *the property*.—The attacks, made by the periodical press, on the character and conduct of Buonaparté, were sometimes fair and discreet enough; but, in many instances, they were scandalously false and foul, and calculated to produce, in the end, much more harm than good. One of the first facts, which, after war was declared, the London news-press communicated to the world was the following:—"Amidst the general rejoicings, at Edinburgh, on his Majesty's Birth-Day, an effigy of Buonaparté, dressed in a general's uniform, was carried in procession through the principal streets of the city and Leith, and, after a mock trial, was sentenced to be *banged, drowned, and burnt*." ‡ The act of publishing an account of this transaction shows to what a depth of degradation the press must be sunk, that same press, which had, only a few months before, related, with the utmost delight, painted in the most pleasing and glowing colours, the exultation of the people upon the conclusion of peace with Buonaparté, upon the cordial friendship established between their king and the man whom they now repre-

sented as a malefactor about to suffer an ignominious death!—Now began the age of Placards, or "Patriotic Handbills" and pictures, and scandalous indeed was the scene. The newspapers had led the way. They had called Buonaparté "a tyrant, a despot, a cut-throat, a murderer, an assassin, a poisoner, a monster, an infidel, an atheist, a blasphemer, a hypocrite, a demon, a devil, a robber, a wolf, an usurper, a thief, a savage, a tyger, a renegade, a liar, a braggart, a cuckold, a coward, and a fool." I am turning over the pages of a volume of newspapers, and I set down the names just as they occur. I could go on, and add greatly to the list, but the task is too disgusting, and besides, my specimen is already ample enough. The question here is, not whether Buonaparté *merited* this application of the newspaper vocabulary, but whether it was not most scandalous to see that application made by the very writers, who had but a few months before, nay, but a few weeks, a very few weeks, before, applauded the ministers for making peace with him, and reprobated, in the strongest terms, the conduct of all those, who ventured to doubt of his sincerity, or of the permanence and safety of the peace. They even extolled his character, talked continually of his courage, his magnanimity, his wisdom, and even of his piety; and, upon the strength of all those, they severely censured the emigrants of all descriptions, who remained in this country, and who "*obstinately and foolishly* persisted in refusing to return home" and thereby avail themselves of his proffered amnesty; yet, those of them, who have returned and accepted of the amnesty, these very news-writers *now* propose to murder in cold blood, if any of them should be made prisoners in the army of this same Buonaparté!—The newspapers were, however, loaded with a stamp; they were rather too dear; they could not be pasted on the walls; something more cheap, not so voluminous, and exhibited with greater facility, was wanted to complete, what the daily and weekly prints had so patriotically begun. Hence arose the placarding system, which, though of transitory existence, and though it conveyed some striking and useful truths to the people, has imprinted on the character of this nation a stain, which will not be easily effaced. *Some* of the publications alluded to, contained *truths*, and truths very necessary for the people to be made acquainted with; but, in the far greater part of them, the writers seemed to vie with each other, who should invent the most shameful, incredible, and ridiculous false-

* The Morning Chronicle.

† The Morning Post.

‡ Morning Post, 10th June, 1803.

hoods, conveyed in the lowest, most foul and disgusting language. This was called "writing to the level of the meanest capacity;" but, the authors, judging of the people by themselves, sunk far lower than the meanest, and absolutely carried their sinking propensity so far, that the very rabble cried *shame*. To enumerate particulars would be endless, one or two, however, as characteristic of the conduct of the press, at the time that you were applauding in parliament, I cannot refrain from noticing. There were a series of placards, purporting to be the different scenes of a play: not the play of Pizarro, but one very little inferior to it either in poetry or patriotism. The first scene is between John Bull and Buonaparté, meeting half way between Dover and Calais, John having a cudgel in one hand, having hold of the nose of Buonaparté with the other, and having one foot lifted ready to kick him, the dialogue of which scene ends thus, in the words of John Bull: "And as for a sea fight, *damn you*, "you have no more chance of success than "I should have if I were to try to jump "over St. Paul's. I know, too, that we "have *licked* you, and *most damnably* too, "when you have been ten to one against "us; and, *damn me* if any ten of you shall "ever have my person or property (*kicks* "his —)."—And this is writing to the people of England! this is the meritorious conduct in the press, is it, Sir! this is what you applaud! But, to proceed to the second scene. Here are assembled John Bull, Taffy, Sandy, and Patrick, having hold of each others hands, and, in appearance dancing round something, the dialogue concluding with a few patriotic expressions from the last mentioned character, thus: "Why, "by *Jasus*, I'd make sure work of him" [Buonaparté], "I'd *cut him in quarters like* "a rotten potatoe, and throw him to the "crows. I'd stop his windpipe to prevent "his escape, and make a harmless man of "him for the remainder of his life. (*All* "hollo out, bravo! *buzza!* and go dancing "off, band in band). Upon reading these words, casting one's eye, at the same time, on the representation at the top of the placard, it was impossible to prevent the intrusion of the idea of a set of cannibals dancing round a roasting prisoner of war.—While the typographical gentlemen were busy in their way, the copper-plate press was not idle. There was, and yet is, to be seen the head of Buonaparté, severed from his body, and exhibited upon the pike of a Volunteer, with the blood dripping down upon the exulting crowd. In another place you may

see a volunteer, one of your favourite volunteers, having a score or two of ghastly and bleeding French heads tied by the hair round the handle of his pike, and hailed by a whole bevy of females, who vie with each other to reward him with their charms, all of them singing, "none but the brave deserve the fair."—But, it were endless to enumerate: a volume would not contain even a short description of a tenth part of these shocking and disgraceful exhibitions, the tendency, and the sole tendency, of which is, to prepare the people for acts of cowardly barbarity. Buonaparté, the same Buonaparté, with whom we made a peace which these printers employed all their talents to celebrate; that same Buonaparté has been, and now is, exhibited by them as being in the pillory, at the whipping-post, on the gallows, at the gates of hell; and, finally, the same window, nay, the same pane of glass, which, a few months ago, discovered him shaking hands with our king, while the French and English flags united waved over their heads; that very identical pane of glass now shows the Consul, no longer in company with King George III., but with the Devil, who has the little hero, upon a toasting fork, writhing before the flames of hell!—What, Sir, your admired hero, your "Hannibal," in company with Satan! Just after the battle of Magengo; just after a decided victory over the allies of England, during the last war, you eulogized Buonaparté, and you complained most bitterly of the "abuse," which had been heaped on him, in and out of Parliament; and, I should be glad to know, what has taken place to render him more detestable now than he was then, and to induce you to approve of and applaud, as applied to him, abuse and execrations, which, as Uncle Toby says, one would scarcely utter against the very Devil himself. Will you say, that it was not on the abusive part of the conduct of the press that you bestowed your approbation? Why, then, your captious reply to Mr. Windham, who had censured only the trash, which the press conveyed to the world, and not the contents of the prints generally? Your defence was indiscriminate; you have all the honour of being praised by the press; and, therefore, it is my province to show, what that honour is, what that praise is worth; and, I am persuaded, that every impartial person, whether native or foreigner, will allow, that, of the press that I have described, it is the friendship, and not the enmity, which an honest and honourable man would be inclined to regard as a disgrace. On this part of the topic, let it be observed,

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too, that the print, which you have, upon several recent occasions, honoured with *special* and unequivocal marks of your approbation, is precisely that, in which was first proposed the horrid scheme of murdering the prisoners of war, a scheme, therefore which, according to your own principle, I might very fairly ascribe to yourself.—Here I should conclude my remarks on the conduct of the London prints, were there not an instance of their baseness, which, though I had like to have forgotten it, certainly surpasses all the rest.—I have heretofore shown, that, during the *last war*, neither you nor the London news-writers ever appeared to feel any resentment against Buonaparté; nor, indeed, against any of the rulers of France, but particularly Buonaparté, whom, on the contrary you eulogized, and whose conduct you always defended, except when he happened to be a little unfortunate. I quoted the passage of the speech,* where you exclaim: “Sir, I confess to you, that I look back with astonishment to the period, when that great general” [Buonaparté] “was so *vilely libelled*. I was wont to expect more candour, more liberality of sentiment, in an English gentleman. But *the war* has deadened every heroic feeling, which once gave the tone to the martial spirit of this abused country.” Precisely *why* the war should have deadened every heroic feeling you did not tell your hearers; but, if you were correct in asserting, that Buonaparté was vilely libelled, in consequence of a want of heroic feeling, it must be confessed, I think, that the present war is, in this respect, at least, full as unfortunate as the last; for he certainly has been ten million times more abused, during the last six months, than ever he was before abused in the whole course of his life.—As to the conduct of your friends and colleagues, the news-writers, I shall select only one instance; but that one is so directly to the point, so complete in all its parts; it so entirely embraces the news-printers, the ministers, and yourself, that it is worth a volume of ordinary materials. You cannot have forgotten, Sir, the publication of the letters, which were intercepted in the Mediterranean, on the passage from the French army in Egypt to France: you cannot have entirely forgotten this publication, because you frequently censured it very severely, as an *ungenerous* and *illiberal* act, particularly as some of the letters were said to contain private, not to say scandalous, anecdotes. Your faithful coadjutors of the press joined in this

accusation against the ministers, making on the proposed publication, the following, amongst many more observations: “It is *not very creditable* to the generosity of office, that the private letters from Buonaparté and his army to their friends in France, should be published. *It derogates from the character of a nation to descend to such gossiping*. One of these letters is from Buonaparté to his brother, complaining of the profligacy of his wife. Such are the precious secrets, which, to breed mischief in private families, are to be published in French and English!!” * Such, Sir, were the sentiments of the London news-writers during the last war. The ministers disappointed them; the gossiping letters were *not* published; the complaints of Buonaparté, relative to his wife, never made their way to the public, till they fell into the hands of the tin-man ministers, who have lately communicated them to the world, through the most appropriate of all channels, the London newspapers; those very newspapers, too, which reprobated the publication of any of the private letters, and especially of that letter, which is here more particularly alluded to, and which I insert for the purpose of pointing out the low-minded, impotent, idiot like spite, displayed in the whole transaction.—“*Le Caire, le 7 Thermidor (25 Juillet, 1798.)—Tu vaira dans les papiers public la relation des batailles et la conquete d’Egypte qui a été assés dispute (assez disputée) pour ajouter une feuille à la gloire militaire de cette armée. L’Egypte est le pays le plus riche en blé, Ris, légumes, viancé, qui existe sur la terre la barbarie est à son comble, il n’y a point d’argent pas même pour solder la troupe. Je pense etc (je pense être) en France dans 2 mois, je te recomende mes intérêts—j’ai beaup beaup (beaucoup) de chagrin domestique car le voile est entierement levée, toi seul me reste sur la terre ton amitie mest bien cher. Il ne me rest pour devenir misantrophe qu’a te perdre et te voir me trair (me trahir) C’est ma triste position que d’avoir à la fois tous les sentimens pour une même personne dans son cœur—tu m’entend!—Fais enforte que j’aie une campagne à mon arrivée soit près de Paris ou en Bourgogne je comte y passer l’hiver et m’y enterrer. je suis annué (ennuyé) de la nature humaine! j’ai beson de solitude et disolément la grandeur m’annue (m’ennuie), le sentiment est deseché la gloire est fade à*

* See Register, present volume, p. 394.

* Morning Chronicle, 24th November, 1798.

" 29 ans j'ai tou épuisé, il ne me reste plus
 " qu'à devenir bien vraiment egoïste, je
 " compte garder ma maison jamais je ne la
 " donnerai a qui que ce soit. Je n'ai plus
 " que de quoi vivre! adieu, mon unique
 " ami que je n'ai jamais été injuste envers
 " toi! tu me dois cette justice malgré le de-
 " sir de mon cœur de letre tu m'entend!—
 " Embrasse ta femme pour moi. *"—Was
 there ever such a miserable attempt to injure
 the character or wound the feelings of an
 enemy! Was there ever before such an act,
 on the part of persons calling themselves a
 government? Mr. Pitt and his colleagues
 you and your newspaper associates abused,
 upon the bear *suspicion* of their having an *in-*
tention of making this publication, this very
 publication, which is now actually made by
 the tin-man ministry, not only without your
 censure, but with your approbation, with
 your applause, and even with your active as-
 sistance! Besides, as to the *policy* of the mea-
 sure, what end do you think it could answer?
 Raise a laugh at the expense of the Consul?
 Not it, indeed. It was much better calcu-
 lated to check the laugh already raised; it
 completely removed the odious impression,
 which had been made against him by the
 persuasion, that he had married his wife
 merely as a price of his command of the ar-

* This letter, which was written by Buonaparté
 to his brother Joseph, is taken from the Morning
 Chronicle of the 24th of August last. The fol-
 lowing is a tolerable good translation.—"Cairo,
 " 7 Thermidor, July 25, 1798.—You will see in
 " the public papers a narrative of the battles and
 " of the conquest of Egypt, which has been enough
 " contested to add a wreath to the military glory
 " of this army. Egypt is one of the richest coun-
 " tries on earth in grain, rice, pulse, meat, but
 " nothing can be more barbarous. It has not
 " money even to pay the army. I intend being
 " in France in two months. I commend my inter-
 " rest to you. I have a great deal of domestic
 " vexation, for the veil is entirely removed. You
 " alone remain to me on earth. Your friendship
 " is most dear to me. Nothing is wanting to ren-
 " der me a misanthrope, but that I should lose
 " you, or that you should betray me. It is my sad
 " situation to have at once all the sentiments in
 " my heart with regard to one person—You un-
 " derstand me!—Manage matters so, that on
 " my arrival I may have a country house near
 " Paris, or in Burgundy. I intend to pass the
 " winter there, and bury myself. I am disgusted
 " with human nature. I want solitude and retire-
 " ment. Greatness disgusts me; feeling is dried
 " up; glory is insipid; At 29 I have found every
 " thing vanity and vexation.—Nothing remains
 " for me but to become wholly selfish. I intend
 " to keep at home, never will I admit a soul. I
 " have only just enough to live on. Adieu my
 " only friend. Would I had never been unjust to
 " you! You owe me this justice, in spite of the
 " desire of my heart—You understand me.—My
 " respects to your wife."

my of Italy; and, in short, the sentiments of
 the whole letter are such as to do infinite ser-
 vice to his character, and, of course, to that
 cause, in which he is now engaged for our
 destruction. Was there, Sir, any one
 amongst you weak enough to imagine, that
 the pointing out of the *orthographical* errors
 in this letter would injure the reputation of
 the writer? Is it possible that you could
 suppose that this pedagogue-like discovery
 would diminish the terrors of a name, at
 which you have grown pale? Never, I will
 venture to say, never was there an effort at
 once so spiteful and so impotent. Not that
 there would have been, as far as the news-
 printers were concerned, any thing blame-
 able in endeavouring to amuse their readers
 at the expense of the Consul and his wife, if
 the said news-printers had not before repro-
 bated others for *thinking* of what they them-
 selves have done, and if they had not, for se-
 veral months before, been in the daily habit
 of *extolling the virtues* of the woman, whose
 peace and whose reputation they now were
 attempting to destroy. The pages of the
 London newspapers were, from the signing
 of the preliminaries, in Oct. 1801, to the no-
 tice of the rupture, in March, 1803, so plen-
 tifully strewn with flowers for the feet of
 Madam Buonaparté, that many persons sus-
 pected her Consular Majesty of having
 crossed the hands of the proprietors, a sus-
 picion which I am far from asserting to have
 been totally unfounded. She was every
 thing that was excellent in woman, so mild
 in her manners; "so *condescending* to her
 " Grace the Duchess of Gordon and her
 " lovely daughter;" so *friendly* and *partial*
 to the English in general; so *forgiving* to
 the ancient noblesse. It was to her that every
 act of Consular grace was attributed; she
 cut the fatal cord of the state malefactor,
 stopped the wheels of the dreadful diligence
 of Cayenne, and, as to soup-shops and other
 charity subscriptions, she yielded not to John
 Julius Angerstein himself!—This, Sir, this
 shameful tergiversation it is that I abhor,
 and that must be abhorred by every man not
 totally destitute of principle. I hate Buona-
 parté, I cordially hate him, for several rea-
 sons, but particularly because he is the
 sworn and the dangerous enemy of my coun-
 try and my Sovereign; and, it will be readily
 allowed, that to this reason, which ought to
 be common to all my fellow subjects, I have
 an additional one in the denunciation,
 which, in his name, has been levelled against
 myself. But, great as my hatred of him is,
 great as my sufferings would certainly be,
 were I to fall into his power, I would scorn
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through methods such as those proposed, and in part pursued, by the London news-writers, by those writers, whose conduct you so admire and applaud; for, though I love liberty, and life as well as other men, I am satisfied that neither liberty nor life is worth preserving, if to be preserved only by infamous means; and, as to my country, much rather would I, that England should be utterly destroyed, than that Englishmen should be accounted that cowardly, bloody-minded, brag-gart race, which, from the recent labours of the press, the world would naturally suppose them.—Having now, Sir, given a brief, though, as far as it goes, just description of the character and conduct of the persons, on whom, while you thought proper to censure me, you bestowed such unbounded applause, I shall, in my next letter, conclude the series with an humble endeavour to show the connexion existing between you and those persons; the reciprocal dependence, as I before described it, which subsists between you and the men concerned in conducting the London newspapers, and the mischiefs which have arisen, and which must yet arise, from the existence of this reciprocity.—I am, Sir, yours, &c. &c. WM. COBBETT.

Nov. 12th. 1803.

TO THE EDITOR.

Oxford, Nov. 14.

SIR,—You have well and ably pointed out the absurdity of instituting a comparison between the regular army and the volunteers; and, indeed, their dissimilarity in every point of view, is so evident, that it could never have escaped the remark of any, but the wilfully ignorant. Amongst other absurd and pernicious principles, the volunteers are, it seems, permitted to deliberate and decide, respecting their uniform and accoutrements, as if illiterate shop-keepers and artizans were competent judges in such matters!—This is indeed a privilege of which, if we may be allowed to form any opinion from a circumstance which has occurred in this city, they are most tenacious, and cannot without the utmost difficulty be induced to relinquish.—The Oxford Loyal Volunteers would probably be not a little offended were I to deny their claim to the appellation of *soldiers*. And yet, Sir, if disobedience, and a mutinous spirit, annihilate such a claim, they can no longer, with the least shadow of justice urge it. The above-mentioned corps has been established for some months; and to do the men justice, or rather their adjutant, who is most indefatigable in his exertions, have really made

considerable progress. Their adjutant, anxious to render them in appearance, at least, and as far as externals were concerned, soldier-like, took an opportunity, when the regiment was paraded last week, of objecting to the use of velvet, in lieu of leather stocks, and requested that they would not for the future appear with such an unmilitary appendage. Would you believe it, Sir, the gentlemen volunteers took fire at this remark, and jealous of any encroachment on their ridiculous privileges, vociferated from on all sides, in the genuine spirit of a democratical rabble, *velvet, velvet!!!* One of the ring-leaders in this disgraceful business was fortunately detected, and threatened with being reduced from the light company to the battalion. This, it might have been expected, would have put a stop to all such proceedings in future; but our *loyal* volunteers were not to be so treated; they conceived, that they themselves were the most proper judges, both of guilt and punishment of any of their comrades, and instead of acquiescing in the sentence, the company to which the offender belonged, unanimously declared their resolution of retiring from the corps, if it should be put in force. And, mark the consequence, *it was not enforced*.—Such, Sir, are the patriots to whose exertions the safety, honour, and existence of the British Empire are confided. Such the men, whom the present weak and wicked administration delight to honour. They have been styled the depositories of panic; I cannot but fear they will equally prove the depositories of *sedition*. If the old adage *ex minimis fiunt maxima* be true, we cannot but entertain melancholy forebodings of the consequences of *intermixing such turbulent and seditious spirits with our regular troops*.—I am yours, &c. &c.

PHILO-PATRIÆ.

INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.—The trade of Amsterdam and Rotterdam has suffered a ruinous interruption from the interference of the French in the commercial affairs of the Batavian republic, and from the vigilance which the British cruizers off that coast exercise in annoying the shipping of those ports. French officers have been appointed in every custom-house, for the purposes of controlling the Batavian officers, and enforcing the prohibitions against British merchandise.—It was reported at Cadiz, that an agreement had been made at Madrid, on the 6th of October, between the French Ambassador, and the Spanish Minister, that Spain should be per-

mitted to remain neuter, during the present war, upon condition of her paying ten millions of dollars annually to France.—Lord R. Fitzgerald has lately communicated to the British government, such information relative to the present political state of Portugal, as to remove all apprehensions respecting the immediate safety of British property in that kingdom.—The war, which, for some time past, has been carried on between the United States of America and the Emperor of Morocco, has been recently terminated; and the Emperor has agreed to restore the treaty which was concluded with the United States, by his father, in the year 1786.—St. Domingo continues to be the scene of trouble and misery. The scarcity still prevails there; and, notwithstanding the ravages of the negroes, General Rochambeau is determined to keep possession of the island to the very last hour.—Martinique is in a state of siege, and the governor, who is apprehensive of an attack from the British, has exhorted the soldiers and inhabitants of the island to make a vigorous resistance.—Since the capture of St. Lucia, the English governor has invited the Americans to a renewal of their commercial intercourse: the terms which he offers are liberal, and a considerable number of vessels have already entered the ports of the island.—The American newspapers are filled with complaints against the conduct of the commanders of the British cruizers, on the American and West-India stations, in impressing American seamen, and detaining American vessels.

DOMESTIC.—For some days past, a new alarm has been excited in Dublin, by the apprehension of some persons of rank and fortune, who are said to have been connected with the leaders of the late rebellion. The arrests are numerous; and it is now asserted, that the plot has been discovered to be more extensive than was previously supposed.—Quigly has been frequently examined, and has made some important confessions to the government. Teeling, brother of General Humbert's aid-de-camp, who was executed in 1798, has been brought to Dublin from the North, under a strong escort: he is charged with being a member of the provisional government; and after being examined at the castle, was remanded for further examination.—The commission of Oyer and Terminer, which was sitting at Dublin, made an order, that all persons confined on charges of treasonable practices, except under a Secretary's warrant, or by virtue of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, shall be discharged by proclamation. The court then adjourned till the 10th of December next.—

A late Portsmouth news-paper states, that "The trade of Portsmouth and Portsea is nearly stagnated, from the deficiency of small coin for exchange. We know that there are persons who make a business of collecting such monies, which they have the boldness to issue at the profit of a shilling and eighteen-pence upon a one pound note. We are in possession of many of the names concerned in this illegal and anti-patriotic traffic, to whom we give this warning, cautioning them, at the same time, against impending prosecution, which will not fail (under conviction) of the most serious consequences, both to their character, persons and property. The evil is of such a magnitude, that many persons, who are strangers here, daily embark without common necessities for their respective voyages."—Mr. Alexander has declined going to India, in a judicial capacity, as was intended by the late arrangements; and Mr. Hobhouse, who was to have succeeded him as Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, has been appointed Secretary of the Board of Control. — Lord Hawkesbury has been called up to the House of Peers, by writ, by the title of Baron Hawkesbury.—The King has been pleased to appoint the Hon. Henry Pierrepont, to be his Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary to the court of Stockholm.—The King has also been pleased to grant to the Rev. Walker King, D. D. the place and dignity of a Canon or Prebendary of the Metropolitan church of Canterbury, void by the resignation of William Beaumont Busby, clerk, late Canon thereof.—The treaty concluded between Great-Britain and the United State of America is now expiring, and negotiations are carrying on between Mr. Monroe, the American Ambassador here, and the British cabinet, for the formation of another.

MILITARY.—The inhabitants of Malta, made an offer to his Majesty, of raising two regiments of infantry at their own expense, for the protection of the island: the offer, it is understood, was graciously accepted.—General Lasnes has informed the Prince Regent of Portugal, that the army, which has been lately collecting at Bayonne, is to form part of the grand army, destined for the invasion of Great-Britain.—Lord Hobart, in a note to the Lord Mayor of London, dated on the 14th instant, informed him that Surinam, Demarara, and Essequibo had surrendered to his Majesty's forces, under the command of General Grinfield and Commodore Hood, on the 19th of September. The dispatches, however, from General Grinfield and Com-

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modore Hood, which were published in the London Gazette of the 15th instant, only give information of the surrender of Demarara and Essequibo. The capitulation was signed on board the *Heureux*, on the 19th of September; the *Hornet* and the *Netley* entered the river, and two hundred men took possession of Fort William Frederick, in the evening of the same day, and on the 20th, the colonies surrendered. The *Hippomenes*, Batavian corvette of 18 guns, the only vessel of the republic there, was included in the capitulation.—It was said, that general orders will be issued, in the course of a few days, for all the British troops now encamped in different parts of the kingdom, to go into cantonments, barracks, or quarters: papers, for this purpose, were made out and laid before the Commander in Chief, but from some cause, unknown to the public, orders were transmitted to the army, enjoining them to remain in camp until further orders.—Some of the troops at Shorncliff camp have begun to go into quarters. A party of the 4th and 59th regiments took possession of Hythe barracks on the 11th instant. The 52d, and the rifle corps will be quartered at Forts Twiss, Sutherland, and Moncrieff on the beach. The Berkshire and West Kent are to go into Braybourn Lees, near Ashford; and the East Middlesex are to be quartered at Deal.—Barracks are preparing in the city of Canterbury for about twenty-six hundred infantry; and preparations are making, at the same place, for providing quarters for about a thousand more. Barracks, for six hundred men, have also been erected at Maidstone, and six hundred more may be accommodated there in a short time.—The batteries on the eastern and western parts of Margate, are nearly completed, and the guns will be mounted in a few days. The batteries at Ramsgate and Pegwell Bay are finished.—Behind Eastware Bay, near Folkestone, they are forming a sluice and lines, so as to prevent the French from advancing into the interior, if they should succeed in landing on that part of the country.—The batteries intended for the protection of the Humber are completed, and the ordnance is now on its way to the different stations.—It is said, that many of the troops encamped on, and near the coast, will be sent on board of ships, which will be moored as near as possible to their respective camps. The ships are to be immediately fitted out at Chatham. An official return, made at the war office, states the number of volunteer infantry to be 297,502, cavalry 31,600, and artillery 6,207.—Some changes in the staff in Ireland, are talked of. Among others is, that Sir John

Cradock is to be sent to take the chief command at Madras; that General Meyrick is to be removed to the English staff; and that Generals Pigot and Drummond are to go to Ireland. It is also reported there, that some regiments of the Irish militia are to be sent to England, and that some other troops from England will replace them.

NAVAL. On the 2d of August last, Captain Page, in his Majesty's ship *Caroline*, fell in with and captured the Batavian brig *De Haasje*, of six guns, and thirty-three men. The brig had been thirty hours from the Cape of Good Hope, and was bound to Batavia with dispatches, which she threw overboard, before she was taken: she mounted eighteen 12-pound carronades, but had left them at the Cape.—On the 8th of September, Captain Richardson, in the *Juno*, captured the French bombarded privateer *Les Quatre Fils*, of Nicé, armed with four 12 and 9-pounders, and manned with seventy-eight men.—On the 10th of September, Captain Corbet, in the *Bittern* sloop, captured, after a chase of several hours, the French privateer schooner *Le Caille*, pierced for fourteen guns, but carrying only six 6-pounders, and a complement of sixty men. This schooner is one of nine which have for some time past, infested the Straights of the Mediterranean.—On the 14th instant, it was reported in London, that intelligence had been received in Ireland, of the sailing of the whole or a part of the Brest French fleet. The report was, however, soon contradicted; and it is now supposed, that it arose from the circumstance of the arrival of the *Diamond* frigate at the Cove of Cork, with dispatches from Lord Cornwallis to Lord Gardner.—The *Alonzo* frigate has arrived in the Humber, with a fleet from the Baltic.—The vigorous impressment of seamen, which was mentioned to have been made in several ports of the kingdom, in the beginning of last week, has been very general. At Portsmouth, Hull, and Leith, it was carried on with so much zeal, that the trading vessels in the harbours of those places were almost entirely stripped of their men.—Orders have been given at the Dock Yard at Portsmouth, to fit every boat which is capable of carrying a carronade.—It is generally reported that another bombardment of the French ports on the channel, will be immediately attempted. Captain Morrice in the *Leopard*, it is said, will conduct the operations. He will be aided by the *Leda*, *Amethyst*, *Ambuscade*, and *Fortunée* frigates; the *Harpy*, *Bloodhound*, *Basilisk*, and *Archer* gun-brigs; and the *Perseus*,

Locust, and Sulphur bombs. Boulogne, Havre, Dieppe, Gravelines, and Calais, will be the objects of attack. — The last advices state that no part of the Brest fleet has left that harbour, and that Admiral Cornwallis is still cruising off that station. — Four ships of the line have been ordered to proceed with all possible dispatch, to join Lord Nelson's squadron off Toulon. — The British squadron in Bantry Bay, and the naval force on the coast of Scotland, are both to be immediately increased. — Sir Sidney Smith is to be stationed off Flushing.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

CONVENTION WITH SWEDEN. — In the preceding sheet, p. 680, I inserted the explanatory convention, which, it appears, the ministers entered into with Sweden, in the month of July last, and in which, for the sake of obtaining some real and sterling *advantages* from us, the Swedes have consented to acknowledge the existence of a right, which we always possessed, and which we have seldom failed to exercise, for which acknowledgment we are to pay most dearly, not in smooth words, nor in bank notes, nor in three per cents, but in gold, silver, and reputation. On account of this Convention, however, the ministers are, it seems, about to claim enormous merit; and, to say the truth, any act of theirs, not big with national ruin, must now be looked upon as comparatively meritorious; but, ere the parliament and the nation again sell themselves to laughter, I beg them to compare the stipulations of this Convention with those, relative to the same points, contained in the treaty, for instance, concluded in 1794, with the United States of America; and to inquire whether the last-mentioned stipulations, which were obtained by Lord Grenville, will ever be *renewed* by the means of his successor. — The comparison, which I am desirous the parliament and the nation should make, naturally divides itself into two distinct heads; to wit; FIRST, the list of articles, which are to be considered as contraband of war, and, if taken on their way to an enemy's port, to be *confiscated*; and, SECONDLY, the articles, which are to be subjected to the operation of the *right of pre-emption*, that is to say, to be liable, if taken on their way to an enemy's port, to be brought into the port of the belligerent captor, and there, if the said captor chooses, to be kept by him, he paying for the articles, as well as for the detention of the vessel, at a certain specified rate. — As to the first point, both the Treaty and the Convention

declare to be contraband of war, gun-powder and salt-petre, and all implements and instruments of war. It is only in the list of materials for building and equipping ships that they differ: it is, indeed, in this list only that they could easily be made to differ; and, accordingly, the difference is here most striking, most important, and most injurious to the interests of this country, as will evidently appear from the following view.

TREATY WITH AM.

"Ship-timber, tar or rosin, copper in sheets, sails, hemp and cordage, and generally whatever may serve directly to the equipment of *vessels*, unwrought iron and fir-planks *only* excepted."

CONV. WITH SWEDEN.

"All *manufactured* articles immediately serving for the equipment of ships of war."

The difference scarcely needs pointing out. In the Convention with Sweden only *manufactured* articles, immediately serving for the equipment of ships, are deemed contraband of war; such, for instance as sails and cordage; but, in the treaty with America, in which we maintained, that we had insisted only on our indubitable rights founded on the law of nations, not only manufactured articles, but ship-timber, tar, rosin, hemp, and generally, every thing that may serve directly to the equipment of ships, every thing, unwrought iron and fir-planks *only* excepted. And, observe, too, that, in the Swedish Convention, even manufactured articles are considered as contraband only when they are such as may immediately serve to the equipment of ships of "*war*;" whereas, in the treaty with America, all articles, both manufactured and unmanufactured, are included, if they are such as may directly serve to the equipment of "*vessels*." This is a very material distinction; for, many of the articles, which are unfit for the equipment of ships of war, may be rendered not less mischievous to us by being employed upon other sort of vessels; and, indeed, under the favour of this clause, Sweden might, if she had the means, supply France with every article which France can possibly want in the construction and equipment of her navy. — But, let us now compare the two instruments as to the second point, that is, the list of articles, which are to be subjected to the right of pre-emption.

TREATY WITH AM.

"And whereas the difficulty of agreeing on the precise cases, in which alone *provisions* and other articles not generally contraband may be regarded as such, ren-

CONV. WITH SWEDEN.

"The cruisers of the belligerent powers shall exercise the right of bringing in the ships of the neutral going to the ports of an enemy, laden with cargoes of provi-

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ders it expedient to provide against the inconveniences and misunderstandings which might thence arise: it is further agreed that whenever any such articles so becoming contraband, according to the existing laws of nations, shall for that reason be seized, the same shall not be confiscated, but the owners thereof shall be speedily and completely indemnified; and the captors, or in their default, the government under whose authority they act, shall pay to the masters or owners of such vessels, the full value of all articles, with a reasonable mercantile profit thereon, together with the freight, and also the demurrage incident to such detention."

sions, or with cargoes of pitch, tar, hemp, and generally all unmanufactured articles whatever, serving for the equipment of ships of all descriptions, and likewise all manufactured articles serving for the equipment of merchant vessels, (herrings, iron in bars, steel, rose-copper, brass and brass wire, deal, planks not being oak, and spars, however, excepted), and if the cargoes so exported in the bottoms of the neutral power, are the produce of the territory of the said neutral power, and going on account of the subjects thereof, the belligerent power shall in that case, exercise the right of purchasing them, upon condition of paying a profit of ten per centum upon a fair invoice price, or the fair market price in England or Sweden respectively, at the option of the owner, with an indemnification for detention and necessary expenses. But, herrings, iron in bars, steel, rose-copper, brass, brass wire, deal, planks not being oak, and spars, shall not be liable to confiscation or pre-emption, but shall be permitted to pass free in the ships of the neutral country."

This clause of the American treaty is the most complete and comprehensive that can possibly be conceived. It proceeds upon the acknowledgment of our right of pre-emption, founded on the existing law of nations; and the negotiators, having before enumerated the articles, which are always contraband of war and liable to confiscation, now include all "other articles which are not generally contraband," but which, from circumstances, may be regarded as such, placing provisions at the head: so that, according to this treaty, it would be impossible for neutral vessels, if met by our cruisers, to carry to its destination any one article that might serve to assist the enemy, as to his means of equipping vessels of any sort, or, generally, of prosecuting the war. How different are the stipulations with Sweden! Pitch, tar, and hemp, which are the chief articles wanted for naval equipments in France, and which are, in the American treaty, expressly stated to

be contraband of war, and liable to confiscation, are here as expressly stated *not* to be contraband of war, not to be liable to confiscation, and, of course, to be allowed a free passage to the enemy's ports, only at the risk, if risk it can be called, of being brought into England, and purchased at prompt payment, with a profit of ten per centum on the invoice, or at the market price of England or Sweden, at the option of the owner, together with an indemnification for detention and necessary expenses; In fact, these three materials for ship building and equipping, pitch, tar, and hemp, which, in the American treaty, and according to the law of nations, are considered as contraband of war, are in the Convention with Sweden, put upon the footing, on which "provisions, and other articles not generally contraband," stand in the American treaty.—The law of nations authorises the seizure and confiscation of all articles, whether manufactured or not, that may serve directly to the equipment of vessels of any sort or size. The words are these: "whatever may serve directly to the equipment of vessels, unwrought iron and fir-planks only excepted." But, in the Convention, this great principle is totally abandoned; and, manufactured articles only are to be confiscated when serving immediately to the equipment of ships of war, those serving to the equipment of merchant vessels being positively stated to be subjected only to the operation of our right of pre-emption, that is to say, to be sold to us at a price, which will, in many instances, be an encouragement rather than a check upon the trade.—Provisions are, indeed, upon the same footing in both instruments; but, in the Convention, there is an exception with regard to herrings, which happens to be the only sort of provisions that Sweden has to export; and, in following up this principle, the Americans, with whom Lord Hawkesbury will next have to negotiate, will have a very fair claim to an exception in favour of their wheat, Indian corn, rice, flour, pork, beef, and butter, which are to them, as articles of export, precisely what herrings are to Sweden.—Not only are all the principal articles for naval equipment, which are regarded as contraband of war in the American treaty, brought, in the Convention with Sweden, into the second class, that is the class of pre-emption; but, there is, moreover, created, in this last mentioned instrument, a third class of articles serving, directly or eventually, to the equipment of vessels, which class is "not to be liable either to confiscation or pre-emption."

Generally speaking, the articles for naval equipment, which are liable to confiscation in the American treaty, are, in the Convention with Sweden, only liable to the right of pre-emption; and, considering that Sweden has no export provisions but herrings, those articles, which, in the American treaty, are liable to the right of pre-emption, are, in the Swedish Convention, "not liable either to confiscation or pre-emption;" but, in the instance of *ship-timber*, and of *spars* expressly named, that which is in the *first* class in the American treaty, is in the *last* class in the Convention; that which is liable to *confiscation* according to the former, is, according to the latter, to be "permitted to *pass free*" to the ports of the enemy, unshackled even by our right of pre-emption!—Again, therefore, I beseech the people to be careful how they, this time, sell themselves to laughter; to consider a little, not the disgrace, which they have purchased, literally purchased, in this Convention; not the *disgrace*, for disgrace has long been familiar to them; but the *danger*, the danger to their country, to their persons, their families, and to their more beloved property. *Conciliation* is the order of the day; a conceding disposition is regarded as the first qualification in a public man; and, ministers are really esteemed in an exact proportion to the depth of that degradation, to which they themselves are willing to sink, and to reduce their country; but, as it was frequently observed, with respect to the treaty of Amiens, so may it as to the Conventions with the neutrals of the North, that "the hope of the coward shall perish;" concession will not save us; baseness, instead of retarding, will hasten our misery and our ruin.—My remarks as to the *consequences* of the concessions, to which I now more immediately refer, I shall reserve for the close of the succeeding dissertation, in which I shall once more endeavour to call the attention of the Public to a subject, not less interesting even than that of the defence of the land they live in.

DISPUTE WITH AMERICA.—For upwards of seven years, I have, in one way or another, been earnestly endeavouring to turn the attention of the rulers of this country towards the United States of America. I was told, that America was *not an interesting object*; that its *distance* was too great; and, though it seemed to me hardly possible, that such observations should, by any man of sense, be made with regard to a country whither we shipped nearly a third part of the whole of our exported manufactures; a country, besides, necessarily our

rival in commercial views, and having a mercantile marine in magnitude fast approaching to our own; though it seemed to me utterly incredible, that, while vast importance was attached to every little point in dispute with Denmark and Sweden, all matters relative to America should be treated with the most perfect indifference; yet, so I found it, and I then foresaw precisely what has since happened; that, at the expiration of the treaty of 1794, if the same wilful blindness continued, the attention, the anxious attention, of this country would be directed towards America when too late. *Events*, the force of events it is, which always, first or last, comes to the vindication of just political opinions.—Now, perhaps, I shall, upon this "uninteresting topic," obtain a hearing; but, whether I do or not, the topic must and will, ere long, command attention; and, if this nation is not doomed to perish, and that speedily too, it is a topic, the discussion of which cannot fail to lead to a legal demand of justice upon the heads of the ministers.—Long extracts from other publications are not often excusable, in a work so little voluminous as this; and, when such loans are made upon the diurnal London prints, one cannot help feeling the necessity of a formal supplication for pardon, which, I trust, however, will be readily granted, in the present case, because it will evidently appear, that the matter, which could not have been drawn from any other source, is absolutely necessary to a clear developement of the subject. This extract is taken from the Morning Post of the 12th instant; it is certainly a production of office, and the object it has in view, is, to prepare the public for some concession hitherto unequalled in baseness, or, for a rapture with the United States, if all the efforts of baseness should finally prove in vain.—"While the attention and activity of Government appear to be almost wholly engrossed by the invasive preparations of the enemy, and by the preparatory measures on our part to meet and frustrate them; and while the thoughts and anxiety of the nation at large seem exclusively to be intent on this more gigantic and impending peril, other topics of great commercial interest, and high political consequence, must naturally intermix and blend themselves with those most ponderous considerations," [mark the style], "though, for the moment, they may be overlooked by the public, or merge altogether in the sea of difficulties, by which we are threatened more immediately to be overwhelmed. The renewal of hosti-

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" lities between France and Great-Britain
 " has naturally furnished the rival and the
 " enemies of either power to avail them-
 " selves of the difficulties in which such an
 " event must necessarily involve the two
 " principal Belligerents. Nations, like in-
 " dividuals, will eagerly seize on every fa-
 " vourable occasion to promote their respec-
 " tive interests, and to remove every ob-
 " stacle and embarrassment by which they
 " may in more inauspicious times have been
 " obstructed and depressed. Thus, since
 " the breaking out of a French war with
 " France, several treaties or renewal of
 " treaties have been demanded, entered in-
 " to, and negotiated between Great-Britain
 " and the Northern Powers, principally re-
 " lating to the privileges of neutrals, the
 " right of search, and the contraband of
 " war. Whatever difficulties might have
 " arisen from these discussions, we have
 " had reason to hope, not only, that they
 " were removed, but that new advantages
 " and facilities have been obtained in our
 " favour. Of this the late treaty with
 " Sweden is a satisfactory instance. But as
 " we imagined ourselves thereby to be more
 " disentangled from our perplexities, we
 " seemed little to expect that difficulties
 " and disagreements would have grown up
 " in a quarter, from which we were more
 " inclined to flatter ourselves with friend-
 " ship and favour, than to dread enmity and
 " obstruction. Little did we seem to ex-
 " pect (by we, we mean the public), that
 " at the present moment, a moment so big
 " with other dangers, from a far other and
 " more formidable foe, the attention and
 " exertions of Government should be dis-
 " tracted by any unseasonable or unreason-
 " able claims on the part of America. Yet
 " little as the public at large seem now to
 " be aware of it; perhaps upon no topic is
 " the mind of Government more detained
 " and urged at the present moment than on
 " the revision, principally of the Twelfth
 " Article of the Treaty of Amity, Com-
 " merce, &c. &c. between his Majesty and
 " the United States of America, concluded
 " in 1794, and conditionally ratified in
 " 1795. The general stipulations of that
 " Treaty are too numerous and diffuse now
 " to admit of a detailed examination; but
 " the spirit and tendency of the whole
 " treaty almost wholly rested, more espe-
 " cially as to its future consequences, upon
 " the Twelfth and Twenty-eighth Articles,
 " of which, for the convenience and satis-
 " faction of our readers, we now insert the
 " following copy:—" [Here the XIIth
 " Article, which relates to the trade between

America and the English West-India Islands,
 was inserted; and after it the XXVIIIth
 Article. This article, which provides for a
 new negotiation, to be begun time enough
 to conclude another amicable treaty, *before*
 the expiration of *two years* after the conclu-
 sion of the last war, ends thus: "but, if it
 " should *unfortunately* happen, that his
 " Majesty and the United States, should
 " not be able to agree on such new
 " arrangements, in *that* case, all the arti-
 " cles of this treaty, except the first ten"
 (which ten only go to the settling of old
 disputes, and have nothing to do with pre-
 sent or future commercial concerns) "shall
 " then cease and expire together." "This is
 " the *unfortunate* issue which the XXVIIIth
 " article seemed to have in perspective, and
 " which constitutes the principal ground of
 " the discussion, in which we understand
 " that Ministers are now deeply engaged.
 " Under any other circumstances the points
 " in dispute might be easily adjusted; but
 " when so many other momentous concerns
 " are at stake, and when we know that the
 " craft, malice, and intrigue of our great
 " enemy will continually and anxiously blow
 " their pestilential breath on every little sore
 " that may break out in the body of any
 " other state, till they fester and inflame it
 " into acrimonious virulence, we may easily
 " imagine how much they endeavoured to
 " irritate the temper of the United States;
 " of themselves, perhaps, too sanguinely dis-
 " posed to derive or extort advantages from
 " the present perplexities and perilous pos-
 " tures of British affairs.—The renewal of
 " this treaty, we are credibly informed, has
 " for some time back formed a principal ob-
 " ject of the discussions of the Consular
 " Cabinet, and is now under the serious
 " consideration of the government of this
 " country. The American government is
 " said to hold the most lofty and menacing
 " language respecting their just pretensions.
 " They strongly remonstrate against any re-
 " striction or limitation whatever, either on
 " their trade or the amount of their tonnage;
 " the arguments they urged to enforce a com-
 " pliance with their demands are backed by
 " threats which we can never imagine they
 " would seriously attempt to carry into ef-
 " fect—indeed these threats are of a nature
 " which prudence persuades us from detail-
 " ing, but which would seem to aim a severe
 " blow at the general commercial interests
 " of this country, and which would prove
 " fatal to the commercial existence of many
 " respectable individuals. It is well known
 " that the trade of America, in West-India
 " and East-India articles, with the continent

“ of Europe, more especially with France,
 “ has of late considerably increased; and, in
 “ proportion to its growing prosperity, will
 “ they naturally be anxious to enlarge it, or
 “ at least to preserve it undiminished and
 “ unrestrained. Such a disposition on their
 “ part, their obvious interests must prompt
 “ them to entertain: it is for us to examine
 “ how far it may be reconcilable with ours.
 “ Mr. Monro is said to have received fresh
 “ instructions from his government to press
 “ this point with every possible urgency;
 “ nor are his exertions and discretion solely
 “ to be relied on; but another negotiator,
 “ we believe, a Mr. Lane, is expected soon
 “ to arrive from America, in order to give
 “ additional force and activity to the pend-
 “ ing negotiation. Ministers will, no doubt,
 “ feel the importance of continuing to main-
 “ tain a friendly understanding with the
 “ United States; but as their coolness and
 “ moderation will, no doubt, admonish them
 “ against any harsh or violent extremity, so
 “ also are we inclined to hope that their
 “ energy and firmness will preserve them
 “ from any unworthy condescension, or pu-
 “ sillanimous concession.” — As to the
 hand, from which this curious production
 dropped, though, from the observation rela-
 tive to an enemy anxiously “ blowing his
 “ pestilential breath on every little sore that
 “ may break out in the body of any other state,”
 one would have attributed it to the Doctor;
 yet, there appears, upon the whole, to be an
 uniform heaviness, which, to give the Doctor
 his due, is not so much the characteristic of
 his compositions as of those of his right
 worthy colleague, Lord Hawkesbury, of
 whose cumbrous periods, whose dullness and
 verbosity, the above paragraph exhibits a
 tolerable specimen. In the Doctor's non-
 sense there is an occasional levity; it is now
 and then whipped up into a sort of froth or
 scum, which, of course, assumes a buoyant
 appearance and effect; while that of his lord-
 ship has no quality that can, for one single
 moment, yield relief from its insupportable
 weight: Lord Hawkesbury's eloquence is the
 lead; the Doctor's is the dross. But, not to
 waste my time upon this fruitless inquiry, the
 writer, be he who he may, sets out with a
 very laboured attempt to convince the public,
 that it is owing to the difficulty of the pre-
 sent times, to the “ ponderous consid-
 erations,” which must have, for some time
 past, occupied the attention of govern-
 ment, that this negotiation with America
 was not sooner begun. But, did not the mi-
 nisters know, on the 1st of October, 1801;
 did they not, on the very day when
 they signed the preliminary treaty with

France; did they not then well know,
 that, in two years from that day, all our
 commercial regulations with America would,
 according to the treaty of 1794, cease and
 determine, unless renewed by a fresh treaty?
 Had they never read the treaty of 1794?
 Did they not read the writings, from which
 the motto to the present sheet of the Regis-
 ter is taken? Will any one believe, that they
 were not duly apprised of the consequences,
 which would arise from their delay to nego-
 tiate? The XXVIIIth article of the treaty
 says: “ it is agreed, that proper measures
 “ shall, by concert, be taken for bringing
 “ the subject of the 12th article to an ami-
 “ cable treaty and discussion, so early before
 “ the expiration of two years after the end
 “ of the war, as that new arrangements, on
 “ that head, may, by that time, be perfected,
 “ and ready to take place.” — Why were they
 not ready? Why were not the discussions
 renewed in time? The two years have
 elapsed some time; they are *passed*, and
 the negotiations are now *beginning*! Say
 that America would not begin them sooner.
 Was she asked? And, if she *refused*, how
 comes it that she is negotiating now? And,
 how comes it that we “ *little expected dif-*
 “ *ficulties and disagreements in this quar-*
 “ *ter?*” How comes it, that we “ were
 “ more inclined to flatter ourselves with
 “ *friendship and favour from America,*
 “ *than to dread her enmity and obstruction?*”
 No; it is clear, that the postponement of
 the negotiation was owing to the pusillani-
 mity of the ministers, who hoped on, from
 day to day, for a juncture more favourable,
 till France found the means of frustrating
 their hopes for ever. They put off the dis-
 cussion of this most important subject, till
 they had suffered France to treat with Ame-
 rica; till Louisiana had been purchased by
 the latter; till, in the terms of that purchase,
 a promise relative to the commercial relation-
 ships between England and America, had
 been included; and, till this country was again
 engaged in a war with France, and a war,
 too, in which they themselves proclaim
 aloud, that we are fighting for our existence
 as a nation. This, *this* is the time that your
 safe politicians choose for negotiating with
 a power, who is, above all things, desirous
 of obtaining some concessions, which it
 would be death to us to grant. Where is
 the use of complaining, “ that, at the pre-
 “ sent moment, a moment big with other
 “ dangers, from a far other and more for-
 “ midable foe, the attention and exertions
 “ of government should be distracted by
 “ any unseasonable or unreasonable claims
 “ on the part of America?” Where is the

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sense of this pitiful whining? The claims may be unseasonable to us; but, are they, therefore, unseasonable to America? "little did we expect it at a moment like this!" Why not? This is the very moment when we ought to have expected it. What does America care, whether the moment is "big with dangers" to us, or not? That is for us to think about. Was there ever before heard, such womanish wailing as this? I wrong the women! I do not believe there is one in the kingdom, who would not, under similar circumstances, have acted a much better part.—Observe, that an attempt is also made to prepossess the public with a notion, that Lord Grenville, in negotiating the treaty of 1794, foresaw that the present difficulties must arise. He foresaw that they would arise, if care was not, in time, taken to prevent them; and, therefore, he provided for such prevention, by a stipulation, of which the present ministers have shamefully and wickedly neglected to avail themselves.—Were it not for our other embarrassments, "the points in dispute with America might be easily adjusted." Very true! and, therefore, we must blame, we must accuse, and we ought to beseech his Majesty to dismiss from his councils, the men who have brought us into those other embarrassments.—This is "a little sore;" but, little as it is, it seems, that some apprehensions are entertained, as to its growing into a very dangerous ulcer; for, we are told, that the demands of the Americans are extremely unreasonable; that they are urged with lofty and menacing language; that the threats alluded to are "of a nature which prudence persuades the ministers from detailing, which seem to aim a severe blow at the general commercial interests of this country, and which would prove fatal to many respectable individuals." This, then, is not merely a "little sore." It is something that will require more skill to cure than Doctor Addington and his whole college possess.—They are alarmed, and well they may be; for this, *this* is the blow, that will most assuredly finish either their power, or the power of England. There is the treaty of Lord Grenville; we were at war, when that treaty was made; it was concluded at a very disastrous period of the war; let the present ministers, therefore, answer with their lives any abandonment of its principles; for, on its principles depend our existence as a maritime power. Mr. Fox censured the treaty of 1794. He said it was too favourable to America; and, in some points, it certainly was. What, then, shall be said, what shall

be done, to the ministers, who shall dare to enter into a compact more favourable to America? Lord Hawkesbury boasted of the clever trick of "*placing the French upon the back of the Americans*," and said it would be a sure means of binding the latter more closely to England. Well; now let us see, whether this deep trick has answered the end proposed; let us see whether he will obtain as good terms as those which were obtained by Lord Grenville *before* the French were placed upon the back of the Americans. The "haughtiness" of the Grenvilles has been, by the present ministers, made the subject of much mob-courting complaint: let us see then, whether as much will be done by their *conciliating* disposition; let us see which is most advantageous to the country, the "haughtiness" of the Grenvilles, or the sycophancy of the Jenkinsons. We have, indeed, already had a tolerable good proof, in the Conventions with the Northern neutrals; but, it is in the result of the present dispute with America; this is the event, that will make the nation *feel*, though it may still be resolved to shut its eyes; this event will bring on it the punishment justly due to its baseness in tamely and silently submitting to the rule of ministers, whose measures it disapproves of, and whose talents and character it despises.—It will be perceived, that I have been obliged to confine myself here merely to a few short remarks on this ministerial paragraph; and that, as to the subject of the dispute itself, I have not room enough even to enter on it. In the next sheet, however, I intend, I. to state the origin of this dispute; II. to describe the objects which the American government has in view; III. to show the fatal effects which, to the commerce, navigation, and maritime strength of Great Britain, must inevitably proceed from the accomplishment of those objects; and IV. to trace the pretensions and demands of America, clearly and fairly to trace them, to their only source; to wit, the misconduct of ministers with regard to the peace of Amiens, and to Louisiana in particular; to the general imbecillity of their councils; and to the utter contempt, in which their public character and talents are held, in the United States, amongst persons of all parties and descriptions.*—I

*In the mean time, to those who have the books, I beg leave to recommend a reference to the following passages.—Letters on the Peace, p. 244 to 254. Political Register, Vol. I. p. 44 to 46.—202, 203.—449, 801 to 811, particularly, p. 805 and 810.—Vol. II. p. 6.—41.—512.—Vol. III. p. 191—299—300—303—471—202; to 2041, particularly, 2034. Preface to Vol. III. p. 2.—Vol. IV. p.

cannot dismiss this subject without observing, that the statement, which has been given in the ministerial prints, respecting the *satisfaction* testified by the Americans at the conduct of our cruizers, is *totally false*, there being now, on the table before me, proof upon proof of their *discontent* as to the conduct of those cruizers, which proofs shall appear in my next. I beg not to be understood as abetting the complaints of the Americans. I know that many of them will prove futile; but, when such a statement is made here, and that, too, with the low and malicious intention of making the public believe, that "the complaints, which were *but too justly* urged by the Americans, during "the *last war*, are now *completely removed*," in such a case, it is my duty to detail facts, which might otherwise have been suffered to pass unnoticed; and I shall not fail to prove, that the complaints of the Americans, as to the point in question, have already been *more numerous* than they were *during any year of the last war*.

COBBETT'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

Whatever difference of opinion may prevail, with regard to the practice which is allowed, or rather, tolerated, of publishing the Parliamentary Debates, men of all parties must agree, that, as long as the practice exists, it is very desirable, as well for the honour of parliament as for the sake of truth, that the reports should display some share of talent, united with the greatest possible impartiality; and, that this has not hitherto been frequently the case, few persons, it is presumed, will be very earnestly disposed to deny. For the hasty compilations of the diurnal prints, as also for the periodical pamphlets, which have heretofore appeared under the title of Debates, and which are, for the most part, mere collections from the newspapers, great allowance is, probably, to be made; but, without inquiring into the cause, the consequence certainly is, that the debates, as at present communicated to the world, reflect very little credit on the nation; and, with respect to the

447 — These references will furnish the reader with almost every useful fact, appertaining to this most important subject.

knowledge, the talents, the principles, and the conduct of the members, some few fashionable orators excepted, produce impressions very far from being either favourable or just. As a remedy for these evils, but particularly for that of the injurious *partiality*, which but too frequently prevails, in the publications alluded to, this work is principally intended; and, that the execution may be commensurate with the design, it has been committed to a gentleman, who is not only eminently qualified for the undertaking, but who, as to this particular pursuit, yields not the preference to any person in the kingdom. — The mode of arrangement and other inferior circumstances will be best exhibited in that specimen of the work, which will, of course, be seen in the first number. It may, however, be proper to observe, that great care will be taken to introduce every important debate by a sketch of the bill, or other topic debated on; that abstracts of the several accounts, estimates, reports, and laws, will be regularly communicated to the reader; and, that marginal notes and references will be inserted, wherever such insertion may appear necessary for the purpose of conveying information, or of obviating mistakes. — The work will be published in Numbers, price 1s. each, the Paper will be of the same size as that of the Political Register; and it is right to observe here, that these Debates will also be included in the Supplements to the successive volumes of the Register. The numbers will succeed each other as fast as the proceedings of Parliament shall furnish materials; and, at the close of the session, there will be published, for the convenience of those who do not take the whole of the Political Register, a title page, a table of contents, and an index, to the volume. — Gentlemen who may wish to be furnished with the work, will please to recollect, that, as there will be published no greater number of copies, than is wanted to meet the immediate demand, and that, as, of course, no back numbers will be kept for sale, it will be necessary for them, if they desire to possess the work complete, to give their orders previous to the publication of the first number, which must necessarily take place, in about a week after the meeting of Parliament. — Published by MR. BAGSHAW, Bow Street, Covent Garden, and also by MR. BUDD, Crown and Mitre, Pall Mall; and may be ordered from any of the Booksellers or Newsmen of London and Westminster.

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